

Teach-WELL Study

How are trainee teachers impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and what support would they like?



PROPOSED SOLUTIONS (by participants)



Hotline

A phone hotline specifically for Early Years In Training Teachers (EYITT): A helpline that can direct them to someone they need and give advice.

Peer mentor

Participants felt that it would be useful to have someone who had already been through the programme.

"Maybe if there could be a virtual meeting with someone who's already done the PGCE course it could probably tell us about their experience...to make you feel a bit more prepared."

Email System

A centralised communication system where someone would reply before the end of the day. For some participants their mentors worked the whole week and would email back within 45mins, others only worked two days a week and would reply only a week after by which point the emergency is no longer an emergency/has already been dealt with.

CHALLENGES AND COMMON THEMES



Lack of written material

Participants cited a lack of accessible, written rules on what is and what is not acceptable during placements.

"It would be useful for things to be in writing....such as certain things that need to be going on in the placement and if they aren't...to contact the IOE."

Lack of support

Participants cited minimal contact with tutors – one of the participants' tutors were on maternity leave, others would stress that participants 'email during office hours'. Some tutors worked on days when participants were at school or at work so it was difficult to organise meetings.

"There was a general message of 'Yes we're here to help..but we're also extremely busy and only reachable in office hours'."

Lack of communication

Strong general feedback on the lack of communication. Participants believed expectations should have been communicated prior to term starting (September). They also spoke of having to probe University when they felt the University should have reached out first instead.

Poor mental health during COVID

There was a general theme of distress amongst participants, exacerbated by COVID.

"I felt extremely drained."

"We have so limited, kind of casual contact with our tutors, which I think is part of all of our experience over the past couple of years with COVID."



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